

A major move toward using fair competitions to promote livestock improvements was taken in 1964-65. Prize money was offered for specified livestock classifications drawn up by the Department following discussion with exhibition, provincial government and breed association officials. The plan was to place more emphasis on utility in purebred livestock fair competitions, to reduce the exhibitions' cost of showing, to encourage more breeders to exhibit, and to increase spectator interest. The new classifications sharply reduced the number of classes and exhibitors were generally limited to one entry per class. Utility features introduced included production requirements on dairy cattle entries, proof of productivity such as "cow with calf at foot" in the beef classes, ROP requirements on swine entries, and "ewe with lambs at foot" in the sheep classes. Carcass classes for steers, barrows and lambs carried appraisal through from the live showing at the fair to slaughter and subsequent display of the carcass at the fair. Interbreed classes were held for steers, hogs and sheep and an interbreed "best udder" class was introduced for dairy cows.

Of the 10 winter and spring fairs, 32 class A exhibitions and 100 class B exhibitions held in 1965, 96 adopted the new livestock classifications in whole or in part. It is estimated that 90 p.c. of the listed exhibitions adopted the classifications in whole or in part in 1966.

Grants to fairs, exhibitions and agricultural museums in 1965-66 totalled \$918,340 distributed as follows: permanent improvements, \$211,711; judges' fees, \$36,243; junior activities, \$100,200; special grants, \$123,000; major building grants, \$12,736; and prize money grants to fairs adopting the new livestock classifications, \$433,450.

### Subsection 2.—Farm Assistance Programs

Basic to the concept of Canada's national agricultural policy is the premise that a stable agriculture is in the interests of the national economy and that farmers as a group are entitled to a fair share of the national income. In pursuit of these objectives, the Department of Agriculture has carried on, over a long period, a program designed to aid agriculture through the application of scientific research and the encouragement of improved methods of production and marketing. Over the years, as conditions have warranted, programs have been initiated to deal with special situations such as the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act (see p. 445) to deal with the results of the drought in the 1930s; the Prairie Farm Assistance Act (p. 462) to mitigate the effects of crop failure; Feed Grain Assistance Regulations (p. 462) to assist in the movement of western feed grains to Eastern Canada and British Columbia; and the Maritime Marshland Rehabilitation Act (p. 440) to save valuable soil in the Maritime Provinces.

Although much has been accomplished and is still being accomplished by these measures, changes in the past two decades have dictated a new approach to some problems. Large-scale mechanization was the sequel to the reduction of manpower available to farmers; the number of farms declined but the size of farms increased; marketing and income problems took different forms. Legislation enacted to meet these situations include price support (Agricultural Stabilization Act), crop insurance (Crop Insurance Act), resource development (Agricultural and Rural Development Act) and credit facilities (Farm Improvement Loans Act, Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act, Farm Credit Act and Farm Machinery Syndicates Credit Act). These measures, with the exception of the Agricultural and Rural Development Act (see pp. 445-447), are described individually below.

**Agricultural Stabilization Act.**—The Agricultural Stabilization Act (SC 1958, c. 22, proclaimed Mar. 3, 1958) established the Agricultural Stabilization Board and repealed the Agricultural Prices Support Act, 1944. The Board is empowered to stabilize the prices of agricultural products in order to assist the agricultural industry in realizing fair returns for labour and investment, and to maintain a fair relationship between prices received by farmers and the costs of goods and services that they buy.